THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 4th March 1954.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Government Estate, Mount Road, at ten of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. SRI J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Enquiry into the food position in Malabar.

* 38 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have issued any orders to the Commissioner of Civil Supplies to conduct an enquiry into the food position in the Malabar district;

(*b*) if so, the terms of the enquiry;

(*c*) whether the Commissioner has submitted his report to the Government;

(*d*) what are the main recommendations of the Commissioner; and

(*e*) whether the Government have taken any decision on the report?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) The answer is in the negative.

" (*b*) Does not arise.

" (*c*) The Commissioner has not submitted any report to the Government but only his ' Tour Note ' relating to his tour in Malabar district, in the first week of January 1954.

" (*d*) & (*e*) The Commissioner inspected the quality of rice issued through ration shops or kept for such issue and issued orders on the spot to clean and down-grade rice which was not found to be up to the standard. The Government ratified his action."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" May I know, Sir, for what purpose the Commissioner made his tour in Malabar, because in the course of his tour he made so many statements concerning the food supply problem of the State? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" It is only for the inspection of all those things that he went to Malabar."

SRI S. T. ADITYAN :—" May I know what is meant by ' down-grading rice ' ? Is it actually the removal of unconsumable stuff from it? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" If the rice is certified to be unfit for human consumption, it is taken out of the

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ration shops or if first-grade rice is found to be not of the standard quality, it is downgraded into second-grade rice and sold at a lesser rate.''

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—'' Is the consignment of rice despatched to Malabar district different from that supplied to the other parts of the State? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' Sir, we do not have any separate allotment for Malabar. It is only from the general allotment that the quota intended for Malabar is supplied.''

SRI A. APPU :—'' May I know, Sir, whether the Commissioner made enquiries with regard to the possibility of removing the zonal system and if so, what was his report to the Government? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' No such investigation was made and he has not made any specific proposals in that regard.''

SRI KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE :—'' May I know, Sir, the places visited by the Commissioner during the course of his tour in Malabar? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' I am sorry, Sir, I do not have the list of places that he visited, but I can furnish the information if the hon. Member is interested.''

SRI K. MADHAVAN NAMBIAR :—'' അരിയുടെ കാര്യത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് മലബാറിൽനിന്നു വളരെക്കാലമായി ആക്ഷേപങ്ങൾ വന്നുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇനിയെങ്കിലും ഒരു പ്രത്യേക കമ്മീഷണരെ നിയമിച്ച് ഇക്കാര്യത്തെപ്പററി അന്വേഷിക്കുമോ ? ''

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI :—'' I will translate the question, Sir. ' Regarding supply of rice in Malabar, complaints have been received by the Government for a long time. Will the Government consider the appointment of a Commission to enquire into these allegations '? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' There is no use of appointing a Commission as such or a Commissioner for Malabar. We have taken steps to remove all the defects which existed there and I think the position is quite satisfactory now.''

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI :—'' Is it not a fact that the Palghat Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Society complained to Government, even after the visit of the Commissioner, that the quality of second-grade rice still available with the society was not being consumed by the people? Will not the Society incur a great loss on this account? ''

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THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, the general complaint was against what was known as the ' red variety.' The total quantity of that red rice was only about 4,680 bags for the whole of Malabar. I do not think there is any serious hardship to people by distributing this rice and I hope by this time the stocks of this rice would have been exhausted."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" முதல் ரக அரிசி கெட்டுப் போயிருந்தால், அதன் விலையைக் குறைத்து, இரண்டாம் ரக அரிசியாக விற்கப்படுகிறது என்று கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் சொன்னார்கள். கெட்டுப் போன முதல் ரக அரிசியைச் சாப்பிடுவதினால், மலையாள ஜில்லாவில் வசிக்கும்படியான மக்கள் பெரிய அளவு காலராவினால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டு வருவது சர்க்காருக்குத் தெரியுமா ? அப்படியிருந்தால், அந்த நிலைமையைத் தடுப்பதற்கு சர்க்கார் தக்க நடவடிக்கை எடுக்க முன்வருவார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I am really sorry that the hon. Member should think that rice causes cholera. It does not. It is not as if when the rice becomes unfit for human consumption, we can press it for consumption. Where the quality has deteriorated, we clean it and then we supply it as second-grade rice."

SRI S. T. ADITYAN :—" Did the Commissioner in fact find any quantity of rice being unfit for human consumption during his tour? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I think that a small quantity of rice was found to be unfit for human consumption."

DR. K. B. MENON :—" In view of the facts (1) that there is a persistent complaint about it, (2) that the Hon. Minister himself has seen the samples and (3) that bad quality of rice means loss to the poor people, may I know what specific actions the Government have taken or propose to take to rectify the state of affairs? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" We have taken definite action and have issued instructions to have the rice cleaned wherever there is complaint and as a result of this cleaning, better quality of rice is supplied. But if the rice is found to be unfit for human consumption, it is completely withdrawn."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" The Hon. Minister said that the allotment to Malabar was also from the general stock. The complaint about the quality of rice had invariably been with reference to the stocks imported from outside the State. Is it not a fact that almost the entire quantity sent to Malabar is out of this imported rice? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" It is because Malabar is the major beneficiary so far as imported rice is concerned. It has to take the major portion of it and we cannot help it."

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SRI P. KUNHIRAMA KIDAV :—" Did the Commissioner visit the interior parts of Malabar?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I cannot give the information now. But if the hon. Member is interested in getting it, I shall furnish him the information."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" This question has been discussed in the Assembly many times. The Hon. Minister says that he had already issued instructions to supply good rice to Malabar. But whenever his instructions go to Malabar, bad quality rice becomes more and more available. This is what we feel. Will the Hon. Minister give an assurance that hereafter he will make arrangements to supply good rice to Malabar?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I think the insinuation of the hon. Member amounts to saying that it is better not to make any complaint to me."

SRI R. KRISHNAN :—" തഞ്ചാവൂരിൽ അരിയുടേയും നെല്ലിന്റേയും വില വളരെ കുറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതായി അവിടെനിന്നും വരുന്ന ചില ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മെമ്പർമാർ പറഞ്ഞു. തഞ്ചാവൂരിൽനിന്നുള്ള നെല്ലും അരിയും മലബാറിൽ വിതരണം ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ടെന്നാണ് എന്റെ അറിവ്. തഞ്ചാവൂരിലെ വിലക്കുറവിനെ പരിഗണിച്ച് മലബാറിലും അരിയുടേയും നെല്ലിന്റേയും വില കുറയ്ക്കാൻ ഗവമ്മേണ്ട് ഉത്തരവു പുറപ്പെടുവിക്കുമോ ? ഇപ്പോൾ മലബാറിൽ വില കൂടിക്കൂടി വരികയാണ്."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM (மொழிபெயர்ப்பு) :—" தஞ்சாவூர் ஜில்லாவிலிருந்து வந்திருக்கக்கூடிய சில அங்கத்தினர்கள் அங்கு அரிசியின் விலை குறைந்துவிட்டதென்று கவலைப்படுகிறார்கள். அதே சமயத்தில் மலையாள ஜில்லாவில் அரிசியின் விலை மிக அதிகமாக இருக்கிறது. ஆகையினால், தஞ்சாவூர் ஜில்லாவிலிருந்து குறைந்த விலைக்கு அரிசியை வாங்கி மலையாளம் ஜில்லாவிற்கு சப்ளை செய்வதற்கு மந்திரி அவர்கள் ஏற்பாடு செய்வார்களா ?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" So far as the procured stock of paddy is concerned, it will be available for Malabar as for any other region. The other part of the question refers to the removal of the zonal system. We have not taken any decision so far."

SRI E. T. KUNHAN :—" സർ, മലബാറിലെ ഓപ്പൻ മാർക്കററിലും റേഷൻ ഷാപ്പിലും ഒരേ വിലയാണ് കാണുന്നത്. അതുകൊണ്ട് റേഷൻ അരിയുടെ വില കുറയ്ക്കുവാൻ ഗവമ്മേണ്ട് ഉത്തരവു കൊടുക്കുമോ ?"

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI (translation) :—" The price of rice in the ration shops and in the open market is the same. Will the Government take steps to reduce the price of rice in the ration shops?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I am quite satisfied with the situation. I am glad that in the open market also rice has come down to the level of the controlled price."

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SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, is not the quality of rice adjudged at the time of purchase, and who foots the bill for cleaning the rice after purchase and before distribution to the people? " 10–10 a.m.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" A certain standard —standard that is known as the Civil Supplies Department Standard—is to be maintained when the rice is supplied to Government. Afterwards if it has got to be cleaned, it has to be cleaned at the cost of the Government."

SRI R. KRISHNAN :—" கனம் மந்திரி அவர்கள் பதில் சொல்லும் போது open market அரிசி விலையும், ரேஷன் ஷாப் அரிசியின் விலையும் ஒன்றாக இருப்பதாகச் சொன்னார்கள். ஆனால், மலபாரிலே ஒரு மூட்டை அரிசியின் விலை ரூ. 48-ஆக இருக்கிறது. இது ரொம்ப குறைந்த விலை அல்ல ; கூடிய விலையாகும். ஆகையினால், இதைக் குறைப்பதற்குச் சர்க்கார் ஏதாவது நடவடிக்கை எடுப்பார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The hon. Member is contradicting the other hon. Member that the open market rice is the same as the controlled rice. I wish they come to an agreement and tell me the exact situation."

SRI G. GOVINDAN :—" தமிழ்நாட்டில் அரிசியின் விலை அனேக இடங்களில் கூடுதலாகியிருக்கிறது. அப்படியில்லாமல் எல்லா இடங்களிலும் அரிசியின் விலை ஒரே நிதானமாக இருக்கும்படி சர்க்கார் ஏற்பாடு செய்வார்களா ? "

MR. SPEAKAR :—" இந்தக் கேள்வி மலையாள ஜில்லாவைப்பற்றியது. உங்கள் உபகேள்வி தமிழ்நாட்டைப்பற்றியது. ஆகவே நீங்கள் தனியாக ஒரு கேள்வி போடுங்கள்."

SRI K. PARTHASARATHY :—" Sir, does the complaint regarding the quality of rice always relate to boiled rice and, if so, does this have any relation to the large outturn fixed by the Civil Supplies department relating to boiled rice? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, evidently the hon. Member is referring to the complaints from Tamilnad. But it is topsyturvy in Malabar. As a matter of fact the complaint is that they want boiled rice and not raw rice."

SRI A. RAMASAMY TEVAR :—" In view of the serious allegation made on the floor of the House regarding the quality of rice, price, etc., will the Government boldly come forward to relax rationing in Malabar? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" If hon. Members from Malabar would agree to the removal of rationing in Malabar district, I am certainly prepared to consider the suggestion. The suggestion of the hon. Member from Tiruchirappalli may not be acceptable to friends from Malabar."

Minor engineering industries.

* 39 *Q.*—SRI A. RATNAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries and Labour be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of minor engineering industries in the State;